



A Conversation About HANDLE

(regarding a child with sensory integration dysfunction)

HANDLE was given permission to use this email conversation between Julia, a parent whose child had gone through the HANDLE program, and Andy, who is contemplating it for his son. Bear in mind, as you read, that this was *one* family's experience, so cannot reflect how things might go for everyone.

Hi Julia,

As I mentioned over the phone, I was given your name as a reference from The HANDLE Institute. We are scheduled for an evaluation for our son in August and I was interested in getting feedback from parents who have had personal experience with HANDLE. I hope you don't mind if I list some questions—but feel free to comment on areas that may not be covered by my questions.

1. How old was your child when he began the HANDLE program?

Our son was 5 years and 3 months old at the time.

2. How long did you continue with the activities?

We did the activities for about 3–4 months.

3. How long did it take to see changes/improvements in your child?

Two weeks, and then continuous improvement thereafter.

4. Did your child have any problems in following the activities or exhibit any reluctance?

Most of the activities were no problem. We had two or three he either found easy after a few weeks, or found irritating. Our HANDLE practitioner recommended a few new exercises as replacements. We received modifications on the irritating ones.

5. How often did your child perform the activities and for how long each session?

We targeted every night; realistically it became about five times per week. Each session was about 10 minutes before bed, plus sporadic "games" during the day at home or at the park.

6. What symptoms prompted you to contact HANDLE in the first place? We have a preliminary diagnosis of ADHD for our 6-year-old son.

Our son would have been diagnosed as ADD, ADHD, ODD and maybe some others. Generally, our life had been difficult for 5 years. It wasn't until we had a second child (without issues) that we realized we needed help. Play-dates and other social situations were extremely stressful. He was very controlling with the other children. Kids didn't want to

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come over to play. He had issues with his body within the space around him. He didn't like being crowded, or watched. He was sensitive in all ways; difficulty with transitions, getting ready to go somewhere, coming home, any situation which required him to do something he was asked to do was extremely difficult... unless he got his own way. He was also quite socially immature. (About 1 ½ years behind.)

7. In retrospect, do you feel that your HANDLE experience was positive?

Yes, yes, yes!!!

8. Did you see improvements at school as the result of your HANDLE program? And if so, what types of improvements?

Results at school lagged behind the results we saw at home. Our son seemed to improve first within the environments in which he was comfortable. Things at school began to improve during the end of the school year. He is still improving. Our practitioner explained it more or less this way: now that we have begun to address the core of his issues from the inside, he is now free to learn to socialize and interact with the world, something he was not able to do before. His peers have had about three years to do this. Now he needs to catch up... and he is catching up!

We are pursuing some further recommendations from our practitioner: we have begun a Tomatis listening program to address specific aspects of his auditory processing disorder (he hates to hear singing). Our practitioner feels this will further enhance his ability to follow directions. We are seeing some progress here as well.

Furthermore, on our practitioner's recommendation we saw an allergist and discovered food allergies and air-borne allergies which likely contributed to his overall crankiness.

Let me continue with this... Our lives have become immeasurably less stressful. Our son is much more comfortable with himself. We are enjoying our son even more than ever. We still have some work to do, but see a really healthy future for us all.

Thank you for taking time to consider my questions, Julia. I look forward to letting you know how it goes for us.

Regards,

Andy